

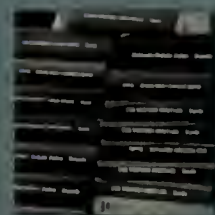
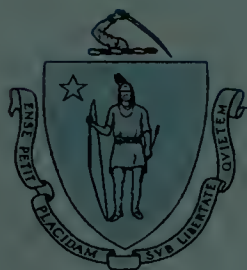
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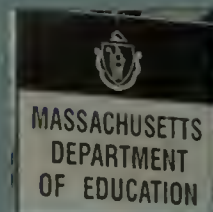
First Annual Education Reform Implementation Report



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September, 1994

Dear Friend of Public Education:

The enactment of the Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993 was both the end of a difficult process of consensus building, and the beginning of a much longer process of sustained commitment to improving student learning. At this, the end of the first year of implementation, we are proud to report that substantial progress has been made in building the foundation for a new state of excellence for Massachusetts public education.

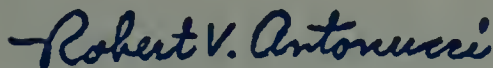
The real work of Education Reform is being done every day in classrooms across the Commonwealth by the thousands of teachers, school administrators, and others who are working to create the schools of the future. Education Reform is coming alive in the Burncoat High School in Worcester where the newly formed school council has brought local college students into the school to help students with math homework after school. And in Holyoke, where two years ago class sizes had grown to as much as forty students per teacher, Education Reform funds have been used to hire additional staff and reduce the size of some classes in half. These are just two examples of how Education Reform has begun to make a difference for our children.

At the state level, the Department of Education has worked with the Governor, Legislature, Board of Education, Executive Office of Education, the Department of Public Health, the Attorney General and others to translate the law into an action plan that serves schools' needs. In administering the foundation formula for example, Department leaders and staff met with nearly every municipal official and school leader. The Department became a network for innovation, helping districts share their questions, problems and accomplishments with each other. In assisting principals with their new responsibilities for student discipline, the Department provided both legal assistance and common sense advice on how the law should be applied.

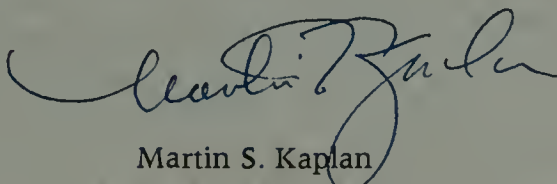
The first year Implementation Plan which we developed last Fall has served as a road map to guide state initiatives and inform all interested parties of the work that we are doing. This report brings the Implementation Plan to completion and sets the stage for next year. Work has already begun on a second year Implementation Plan which will integrate the State Education Reform Act with the new federal Goals 2000 Act, and put the first pieces in place for a Five Year Master Plan for Massachusetts public education.

We look forward to working with you over the next year.

Sincerely,



Robert V. Antonucci
Commissioner of Education



Martin S. Kaplan
Chair, Board of Education

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Executive Summary

On June 18, 1993, The Massachusetts Education Reform Act was signed into law. This historic legislation creates the framework for unprecedented improvements in student learning, teacher professionalism, school management, and equity of funding. While the majority of the Act's impact will take a decade or longer to be fully felt, a tremendous amount was accomplished during the first year.

- ◆ Over 15,000 citizens directly participated in the development of the Massachusetts **Common Core of Learning** outlining what all students should know and be able to do upon graduation from high school. The Common Core provides the foundation for new heightened standards for student performance which will become a graduation requirement beginning with the Class of 1999.
- ◆ Over \$360 million in new aid to schools was distributed under the FY'94 and FY'95 **Foundation Budget** program.
- ◆ 282 school districts received over \$27 million in grants from the Health Protection Fund to fund new **comprehensive health** programs.
- ◆ A new **unified grant process** was developed to provide a single coordinated process in which school districts can access state and federal grants.
- ◆ 809 teachers from 60 districts participated in the **Early Retirement Incentive** program.
- ◆ A **new certification statute** was enacted creating the framework for enhanced professionalism for educators.
- ◆ **School councils** were created in every district to assist principals in managing increased authority at the school-based level.
- ◆ The **Department of Education** reorganized its internal management structure to focus on direct service to schools, and began the decade-long process of implementing the Education Reform Act of 1993.
- ◆ The 105 sections of the Education Reform Act were analyzed, 54 distinct activities were initiated by the Department of Education and Executive Office of Education to implement the Act (see Appendix A); 59 advisory groups, task forces and commissions were convened; and resource materials were developed for schools (see Appendix D).

The Major Statewide Accomplishments of Year 1

As the Commonwealth enters the second year of Education Reform implementation, work has begun on the development of a comprehensive, Five Year Master Plan for public education. This Plan will extend the Department's Implementation Plan into the future, create long-term budget projections for major Reform initiatives, serve as the State Improvement Plan called for by the federal Goals 2000 Act, and provide a unifying structure to link Department of Education work prior to the passage of the Education Reform Act. Through the creation of this Plan, priorities will be identified for each of the next few years. Among the major challenges for the second year are:

The Major Statewide Challenges for Year 2

- ◆ Publicize the **Common Core of Learning** across the Commonwealth and translate the Common Core into **curriculum frameworks** with specific, measurable **content standards** in each subject area for grades 4, 8, and 10.
- ◆ Develop a new system of **student assessment and accountability** based on the Common Core that will be ready to be administered statewide during the 1995-96 school year.
- ◆ Resolve remaining questions of interpretation of the Foundation funding formula, generate five year projections for each district, and work with the Legislature and Governor to bring about **early resolution of state aid to schools** by February.
- ◆ Develop statewide **professional standards** and guidelines for teaching and school administration that will form the base for a new, enhanced certification process and assist school districts in developing professional performance standards.
- ◆ Create a comprehensive statewide system of **professional development** that coordinates existing school and district-based activities with those being provided by higher education and professional associations.
- ◆ Translate the findings of the **Commission on Time and Learning** into a series of concrete recommendations.
- ◆ Develop interim **indicators of school performance** so that parents, local communities, and the state can begin to evaluate schools based on objective standards.
- ◆ Prepare for the September, 1995 opening of up to 25 **charter schools**.
- ◆ Provide a statewide demonstration of **Mass EdOnline** by linking every school in the Commonwealth to the Internet and assist schools in developing local technology plans to distribute the network and harness emerging technologies to enhance instruction.

Introduction

At the core of the Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993 and corresponding federal Goals 2000 legislation is the creation of state-wide educational standards. For the first time, we as a Commonwealth have begun the long task of agreeing on our expectations in four key areas:

- ◆ Standards for what all students should know and be able to do;
- ◆ Standards for what the state and each municipality should contribute to each school district;
- ◆ Standards to evaluate school performance; and
- ◆ Standards for the professional performance of teachers and administrators.

These standards are important to the education system for several reasons. First, the process of developing standards itself is important because it provides an opportunity for all constituencies to come together to discuss and agree on what our common expectations should be. For example, in the nine months that have passed since the Commission on the Common Core of Learning began asking the question: “What should all students know and be able to do?,” over 15,000 parents, educators, and community members directly participated in the discussion by meeting with Commission members, testifying at public meetings, or submitting a written statement. An additional 35,000 people participated at the school building and district level.

The second reason why these standards are important is because, once completed, they will provide agreed upon goals to coordinate all state and local programs. For example, before we can put in place a new system of teacher preparation and professional renewal, we must first come to agreement about our expectations for the profession. Whereas past efforts to license teachers focused on “seat time” in classes, the certification requirements of the future will focus more on the ability to teach and on mastery of subject matter.

The final reason why these standards are important, is that they will form the base for a statewide system of accountability. Since the reformed decision-making structure places the authority at the closest possible level to the classroom, the standards are necessary to ensure that practitioners at each level are accountable to specific measurable results. For example, while Education Reform has empowered school-based management by creating school councils to assist principals in managing increased responsibilities, the standards for school performance will allow the school committee and the state to evaluate each school and take action when needed. In many cases this action will be to

support and disseminate the progress that the school has made, but in some cases, when a school is not showing improvement towards the standards, the district or the state may take action to change the school's leadership.

The Education Reform Implementation Plan

In the Fall Of 1993, the Board of Education approved the Department of Education's Implementation Plan for Education Reform and appointed a Board taskforce to oversee the implementation process. Copies of the Plan were distributed to every principal, superintendent, school committee chair, chief municipal officer, Legislator, state agency head and Constitutional Office holder in the state.

The Implementation Plan identified fifty-four distinct activities grouped into five Strategic Goals:

Strategic Goal I: *Establish new standards and programs for students that ensure high achievement.*

Strategic Goal II: *Administer a fair and equitable system of school finance.*

Strategic Goal III: *Work with school districts to create a governance structure that encourages innovation and accountability.*

Strategic Goal IV: *Enhance the quality and accountability of all educational personnel.*

Strategic Goal V: *Improve the Department of Education's capacity and effectiveness in implementing Education Reform.*

As the first year of Education Reform progressed, it became increasingly clear that the state could not devote adequate resources to each of the fifty-four activities called for by the Act. The decision was made to focus initial efforts on those activities directly related to the development of standards. Some of the other activities, while still important, were delayed to allow for the standards to be fully developed first.

In each of the first four goals, there are primary activities which relate to development of statewide standards and secondary activities which will become dependent on the standards once they are created (see chart on p. 9). Since the statute did not always clearly reflect the parallelism of this underlying structure and some of the standards depend on each other, not all of the goals have progressed at a similar pace.

All fifty-four activities that the Department of Education and Executive Office of Education initiated to begin implementing the Education Reform Act are described in detail in the Implementation Plan. The Plan was written as a resource book to assist those involved with Education Reform in participating

in its implementation. Each activity in the Plan includes the name and phone number of the activity's staff administrator, a brief description of the administrator's projected approach, and a list of key benchmarks that create a standard to track the activity's progress.

Every three months the staff of each activity prepared reports on the status of their work. These reports were summarized into Quarterly Implementation Reports which, in turn, were widely distributed to school districts and Legislators. This report serves as the fourth and final quarterly report on the first year Implementation Plan. An end-of-year summary on each of the fifty-four activities is included in Appendix A.

The First Annual Implementation Report is separated into two sections. The balance of **Part One** is comprised of five brief analyses of the status of the five strategic goals and a conclusion.

The Structure of this Report

Part Two includes the following information:

Appendix A: An end-of-the-year summary for the 54 implementation activities

Appendix B: A status report on the 49 statewide groups involved with the implementation

Appendix C: The final draft of the Common Core of Learning approved by the Board of Education on July 14, 1994

Appendix D: A catalogue of all other Education Reform documents

Constituency	Standards	System of Accountability	Supportive Programs
STUDENTS	Common Core of Learning Content Standards Student Performance Standards	Statewide Assessments Certificate of Competency	Bilingual Ed. Vocational Ed./ School-to-Work Special Ed. Early Learning Adult Ed.
TEACHERS & ADMINISTRATORS	Professional Performance Standards Standards for Professional Program	Provisional Certification Full Certification Recertification Employment Decisions	Pre-Service Training Professional Development
SCHOOLS & SCHOOL DISTRICTS	Interim Indicators School Performance Standards	School Evaluations Underperforming Schools School Profiles School Choice	School Councils Charter Schools School Restructuring Initiatives
COMMUNITIES & THE STATE	Foundation Budget Standard of Effort	Financial Underperformance Local Tax Rate Certification	Foundation Aid State Grants

Education Reform creates a comprehensive system to improve student learning



Education Reform will ensure that each school receives adequate resources...

Analysis of Strategic Goal I

I Establish new standards and programs for students that ensure high achievement.



While it should go without saying that the central work of Education Reform is to improve student learning, it is noteworthy to report the degree to which the first year of implementation has successfully focused on students.

The most important work of Education Reform is the creation of statewide student standards. There are four, inter-related components of this work: 1) the Common Core of Learning, 2) curriculum frameworks and content standards, 3) statewide student assessments; and 4) performance standards and graduation requirements.

Introduction

At its April, 1993 meeting, in anticipation of the passage of the Education Reform Act, the Board of Education adopted a resolution that declared:

“The Common Core of Learning refers to the broad set of educational goals which indicate what students should know and be able to do at the end of schooling; in essence they reflect what citizens highly value and see as essential for success in our democratic society.”

The Common Core of Learning

In September, after an extensive search, the Board appointed a diverse forty-member Commission to “develop and recommend to the Board....educational goals, stated in terms of measurable outcomes...[to] be used as the foundation for the development of curriculum standards, for students, schools and professionals.”

The Commission began meeting in the Fall, first reviewing the best of similar work that had been done in other states. The Commission determined that an extensive outreach effort would be needed to involve all segments of the Commonwealth in a common dialogue about what students should know and be able to do. Commission members met with people and gathered input on the Common Core at public meetings, workplaces, and in their homes. Ten well publicized regional open-house forums were held to directly solicit comments. In January, the Commission held a two-day televised forum at the State House to hear from distinguished speakers from government such as Governor Weld, Senator Kennedy, and Justice Stephen Breyer; from academia such as Boston University President John Silber, Harvard President Neil Rudenstine, Mt.

Holyoke President Elizabeth Kennan, Northeastern President John Curry, Simmons President Jean Dowdall, and UMASS President Michael Hooker; and from business such as the corporate leaders of Fleet Bank, New England Telephone, and Pacer Systems.

In addition to Commission members meeting directly with over 10,000 people, a twenty-two minute videotape entitled "Voices of Reform" was developed and distributed along with 50,000 brochures to every school council and school committee in the state. The local discussions that followed led to the Commission receiving over 1,400 written responses. Through all of the public testimony and input, certain common themes emerged. People expressed their feelings of loss for an education system that no longer prepared children adequately for the challenges that they face. They expressed their recognition that changes that had occurred in the workplace and the home required a new approach to education. Most of all, people expressed their desire for new, higher educational standards.

The fact that so much agreement occurred would not have been so significant if the agreement did not provide a mandate for change. For example, many people expressed their desire for students to develop work skills such as the ability to work in teams, yet schools traditionally have stressed individual achievement. People expressed their beliefs that certain core skills and essential knowledge were so indispensable to students' future success, that no student in any school should go without them.

In February, the Commission agreed on a first draft of the Common Core which identified thirty-nine common expectations for students. 45,000 copies of the draft were printed and distributed widely across the state. A second round of six public hearings was held in which oral and written testimony was received from over 1000 people leading to major revisions to the Common Core. This second draft reflected the concerns that were raised in response to the first draft, specifically that the Common Core should more clearly state its academic expectations. After a few changes, the Commission presented a third draft of the Common Core to the Board of Education on June 21. On July 14, the Board of Education voted to approve the Massachusetts Common Core of Learning. A full copy of the final document is included in Part Two of this report.

The role of curriculum frameworks is to translate the Common Core of Learning into specific content standards and recommended teaching practices in seven areas: mathematics, science and technology, history and social sciences, English, the arts, foreign languages, and health.

Like that of the Common Core, the process that is being undertaken to develop the frameworks is as important as the final product. In April, 1993, as part of a federally funded Department of Education initiative called Project PALMS, several thousand invitations were mailed to principals, teachers, department heads, college deans and presidents, cultural institutions, and professional associations inviting people to participate in the development of frameworks for mathematics and for science and technology. In June, forty practitioners were appointed to two working committees and other interested parties were informed that they could become involved in other ways. In February, 1994, after a similar outreach effort, members were appointed to serve on working committees for the five other areas and for a single, Statewide Curriculum Framework Advisory Council to coordinate the development of frameworks in all seven areas.

Curriculum Frameworks and Content Standards

Also like the Common Core Commission, the framework committees held numerous meetings, hosted public forums, and developed materials which were distributed to every school and district. The framework committees differed from the Common Core Commission in that the emphasis of the effort has been focused more on classroom teachers and other direct educational practitioners. The rate of participation has been extremely high, with participants reporting that their involvement exemplified the ideals of good professional development. The ongoing work at the state and local level to discuss and develop curriculum frameworks has provided Massachusetts educators with exciting opportunities to engage in a valuable dialogue about their profession with their colleagues.

Work on the seven frameworks is expected to continue through the Fall with each framework committee completing an initial draft by January of 1995. A structure for the frameworks has been developed in which several common chapters would be created in areas such as philosophy of teaching and school structure, and distinct chapters would be created for the specific content standards and teaching practices associated with each discipline. Final drafts of the frameworks are scheduled to be presented to the Board of Education for approval next Spring.

Since 1988, the Department of Education has administered a statewide student assessment called the Massachusetts Educational Assessment Program (MEAP). The MEAP has been administered every other year since then with its fourth and final run in 1994.

Statewide Student Assessments

The Education Reform Act of 1993 calls for several important changes to the state's system of student assessment. First, whereas the MEAP provided results

only at the school building and district level, the new assessment system will provide results for individual students. Second, whereas the MEAP was administered once every other year and comprised mostly of multiple choice questions, the new assessment calls for a much more comprehensive approach including portfolio evaluations, performance tasks, and other more authentic assessment techniques. Third, whereas MEAP exempted certain students with special needs or limited English proficiency, the new assessment will be designed to be more inclusive.

A fourth way in which the new assessment system will be different is that, whereas MEAP created de facto content standards, the new assessment system awaits full development until content standards are developed independently by the seven curriculum frameworks committees. This distinction is particularly important in light of the general philosophy of Education Reform that statewide standards must be developed with full participation of all key constituencies. It is also important because it is the standard that should drive the assessment, not vice versa. Only after the Common Core of Learning has described in general and the curriculum frameworks in specific the Commonwealth's expectations for student performance can an appropriate assessment system be developed.

Performance Standards and Graduation Requirements

The final way in which the new assessment system will be different from the MEAP is that it will become the centerpiece in a comprehensive system of accountability. Beginning with the Class of 1999, no student in Massachusetts will receive a high school diploma without receiving a Certificate of Competency based on their performance on their 10th grade state assessment.

This type of "high stakes" assessment will create a growing tension between the push towards making the assessment authentic to reflect the expectations of the Common Core, and the need to make the assessment reliable and objective to create accountability. Work has begun to collaborate with other states through the nationally recognized New Standards Project to create reliable and authentic assessment instruments. In light of the magnitude of this issue, the decision was made to devote the entire FY'95 assessment budget to the development of a new assessment system. During the 1994-95 school year, the Department will begin developing test items based on the curriculum frameworks and the Common Core and will pilot new assessment approaches in a few sample districts. While development will continue for the next several years, components of the new assessment system will begin to be administered statewide in the 1995-96 school year.

Over the next few years, as the student content and performance standards take full form, all other programs that relate to student performance will become increasingly evaluated and coordinated by these standards. In their purest form, special education, bilingual education, early childhood education, adult basic education and other programs that target support for specific segments of the learning population exist primarily to support students in achieving the goals of the Common Core and the content standards of the curriculum frameworks.

A similar change will occur in vocational programs when standards are developed for occupational proficiency. An emphasis of Education Reform and the new federal School-to-Work Act is to both increase the focus on job training programs and further integrate vocational and academic programs. A coordinating council of regional education boards, employers, vocational educators, and other key stakeholders has been convened in a group called the MassJobs Council to focus on the statewide needs of job training. In addition, as vocational and academic standards take form, all schools are to ensure that every student graduates with adequate preparation either to enter higher education or the world of work. In recognition of the fact that students are not well served when they are placed in a so called "general track" that is neither college preparatory nor specifically vocational, the Education Reform Act directs schools to file a plan for the elimination of the general track by September, 1994. Resource materials have been distributed to every school to assist them in generating this plan.

If schools are to meet the enormous demands of assisting students in meeting these new standards, it may become necessary to increase the amount of time that students spend directly involved in education. To explore these issues, the Board of Education appointed eighteen community and education leaders in November, 1993 to the Massachusetts Commission on Time and Learning. In its first few months, the Commission met regularly to consider existing norms and requirements and to outline a vision statement. 50,000 copies of the vision statement were printed and distributed across the state along with an invitation to participate in six well attended regional forums held in June. The Commission will continue its work throughout the Fall and plans on presenting its final report to the Board in December, 1994 and to the Legislature in January, 1995.

Other Programs that Support Students in Achieving the State Standards

Longer School Days and Longer School Years

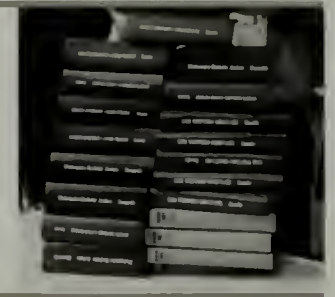


Education Reform will ensure that each school receives adequate resources.

Analysis of Strategic Goal II

II

Administer a fair and equitable system of school finance.



Adequate, equitable, and stable financial support for public education is a pre-requisite for excellence. Such a foundation of financial support by no means guarantees excellent schools, but the lack of such support practically guarantees that a school will fail.

On June 18, 1993, when the Governor signed the Education Reform Act into law, he made a promise on behalf of the himself and the Legislature that every school would receive proper financial support. Three days prior, the Supreme Judicial Court cemented that promise in the landmark case *McDuffy v. Robertson*, when it found that the state was constitutionally required to “cherish its schools.” With these two actions, the Commonwealth took a major step forward towards creating a system that meets the criteria of adequacy, equity, and stability. This is accomplished by establishing two sets of standards.

Introduction

The first set of standards determine what constitutes an adequate budget. The Education Reform Act creates a “foundation budget” for each school based on the particular number and mix of students in that school. The foundation budget is a model, minimal budget which the Legislature determined to constitute adequate funding. It is a budget built mostly on assumptions (i.e. for every 100 students, *X* guidance counselors and *Y* teachers will be needed, *Z* of whom should be special education teachers). Additional resources are made available for each additional low income, vocational, and bilingual student. In the first year of implementation, only 103 of the 351 communities sent their students to schools that met the standard of adequate funding as determined by the foundation formula. The schools in the other 248 communities had a gap between what they were currently spending and the standard of adequacy, called a “foundation gap.”

In order to fill this foundation gap, the Legislature established a second set of standards to ensure that no community was forced to unfairly tax its property owners to fund its schools. The Legislature and Governor then promised to make up the difference between what communities could raise based on their standard of local taxation and their schools’ foundation budgets.

The Foundation Budget

In order to fund this historic promise while maintaining previous financial commitments, the Education Reform Act establishes a funding schedule that ratchets up the state appropriation to schools by approximately \$150 million each year through the end of the century. These increases will nearly double the state's appropriation to schools by the year 2000 from \$1.5 billion to \$2.8 billion.

Barring a further court order, future legislatures and administrations are not legally bound to the funding schedule. However, by setting standards of adequacy and equity, the Legislature will invite close scrutiny from the plaintiffs of *McDuffy v. Robertson* should the financial commitment included in the Education Reform Act be undermined. By the early Fall, Department staff will have resolved remaining questions of interpretation sufficiently to generate a five year budgetary projection for each school. With these five year projections, our schools will achieve the third criteria, stability.

The Impact of New Funds on School Districts

While a full analysis of the impact of Education Reform funds can not be undertaken until school districts file their end-of-the-year reports in September, the results of a Department of Education survey indicate the substantial educational value of new school spending. Abington reported using their new funds to open a fourth elementary school. Everett used their funds to recall and hire a total of forty-two teaching positions. And in Attleboro Education Reform funds were used to create a new, fully staffed Office of Graduate Opportunities to assist students in applying for financial aid for college and to place students in jobs.

Across the Commonwealth, class sizes were reduced as teachers were hired and staff positions filled. New programs were created and old programs that had disappeared due to lack of funding were restored. In some cases whole new media centers were built to house new technology for use by students. Professional development was made available to teachers, both as in-service training and in conjunction with nearby teacher training institutions.

Problems in Implementation of the Foundation Formulas

The transition from 350 different municipal systems of school finance to one statewide system was not without its problems. The timing of the Education Reform Act's final passage created major confusion about districts' budgets through the summer and into the Fall. This confusion was compounded by conflicting interpretations of regional obligations and the implementation of two systems of waivers. The staff of the Department of Education and Department of Revenue did their best to assist school and municipal personnel in interpreting the foundation formulas for the unique situations of their individual districts. At conferences, local public forums, and scheduled meetings, over the first six months of the Act Department staff held individualized sessions with the majority of school districts.

By December, although districts still had problems with their FY'94 calculations, questions had begun about the FY'95 projections. Even though some issues remained to be resolved, the Department fulfilled the Commissioner's commitment to distribute FY'95 preliminary estimates by the end of January.

In determining that it is fundamentally a state responsibility to provide equal education, the Supreme Judicial Court made it clear that the quality of education that a student receives should not depend upon his or her place of residence. School choice fosters a system in which parents can choose to send their children to schools in communities other than that in which they reside. The Education Reform Act expanded inter-district choice in two important ways. Most importantly, it further corrected gross inequities in the initial statute, making the program far less punitive on poorer school districts. Whereas the initial 1991 school choice statute required poorer sending districts to pay the full tuition charged by the receiving district, the Education Reform Act caps the amount that a receiving district can charge and provides reimbursement to schools that spend below the foundation budget level. The second important change to school choice that took effect during the first year of Education Reform, is that districts were now assumed to participate in the program unless their school committee took an affirmative vote to opt out.

School Choice

The foundation budget covers only those students between the ages of five and twenty-one. If the commitment to adequate educational funding is to be extended to young at-risk children and adults who lack basic skills as well, new systems will need to be developed for these areas. Only 32,000 (64%) of the more than 50,000 economically disadvantaged three and four year olds (200% of poverty line) are currently receiving any educational services. The cost of expanding these services to provide full, adequate early childhood education to all economically at-risk children could surpass \$100,000,000 a year. If additional funds are expended to provide at least partial subsidies to some of the other 128,000 three and four year olds, the cost will continue to grow. The Governor's Commission on Early Childhood is currently reviewing the options for addressing this critical need and is expected to report its findings to the Board and Legislature in December, 1994.

Funding for Early Childhood and Adult Basic Education

Similar work is underway to address the needs of adults for of basic education. According to the National Adult Literacy Survey, over 50% of our adult population lacks the basic skills they need to be partners in their children's education and successful contributors to the economy. A Working Committee of the Massachusetts Adult Education Committee is expected to file a final report with the Board and Legislature by October 15, 1994 that will detail options for expanding adult basic education services.



Education Reform encourages school innovation and accountability.

Analysis of Strategic Goal III

III Work with school districts to create a governance structure that encourages innovation and accountability.



The main focus of this goal during the first year of implementation has been to support school districts in transforming their governance structure from a top down model that risks a lack of accountability, to a school-based model in which principals and superintendents now have the authority and accountability to act as CEO's of their respective parts of the system.

The primary change to the governance structure occurred at the school level. The Education Reform Act transferred the authority to make most staffing and operational decisions to the school principal. Within each school, the principal now has the authority to hire, evaluate, and, if necessary, dismiss teachers and other staff. In addition, within the framework established by the school committee, principals are now authorized to make all purchasing and curriculum decisions. As part of this transition, principals are expected to operate as professional managers and no longer are included in collective bargaining units. To assist principals in managing this increased authority, Education Reform required every school to establish a school council by mid-October. Each school council is co-chaired by the principal and consists of representatives from the parent group, teachers union, community, and, at the secondary level, students.

Because school councils have only advisory authority, some councils found it initially difficult to define a meaningful role. While the success of a school council ultimately depends on the individual principal's ability to lead an open and participatory process, the Department of Education and statewide professional associations have provided resource materials and training to assist principals in their new roles. During the Spring, a network of thirteen districts that model school-based management was established to help lead future efforts. Additional resource materials and a new video will be distributed to schools this fall.

School-Based Management

An extension of school-based management is the creation of fully autonomous charter schools. The Education Reform Act authorizes the Secretary of Education to grant charters for up to twenty five schools to operate independently of the school district in which they are located. These charter schools will be public

Charter Schools

schools and will be funded similarly to all other public schools, but they offer an opportunity for educators to pilot new programs, free from many district and state constraints.

During the first year of implementation, fifteen charters and five conditional charters were granted for schools to open in September, 1995. Of these schools, some target specific underserved populations. For example, a charter was granted to a proposed school at Fort Devens to offer a full-time residential school and home to foster children. Other charters were granted to schools that plan on piloting innovative programs. The charter granted to Youth Build Boston, for example, would expand its current program to create a full school operated as an on-the-job construction class room.

**School
Performance
Standards**

As with the other main areas of Education Reform, the success of school-based management and charter schools will be evaluated based on a set of statewide performance standards. Since a school’s success is measured mostly by the success of its students, the development of school standards will depend substantially on those developed first for students. There are, however, certain interim indicators, such as attendance and drop-out rates, that can be used to provide initial benchmarks of school performance. For Education Reform to succeed, schools must be accountable for their performance. This accountability is critical both to the state and local governments which entrust their funds to schools and to the parents who entrust their children to schools.

**State
Accountability
for School
Performance**

The Education Reform Act directs the Board of Education to establish a system for evaluating the performance of each school. The results of this evaluation will be used to publicize successful models and provide additional support to those schools that are not making consistent progress towards the state standards. Particular attention will be focused on charter schools and other schools that are piloting innovations. This process of objectively evaluating different educational models is absolutely essential in bringing about the type of systemic reforms that many educators have worked on for years. While a tremendous amount of work has gone in to school restructuring efforts such as the Coalition of Essential Schools, objective statewide standards are necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of these approaches. If, as is expected, these approaches can be shown to increase student performance, their successes can be replicated throughout the state. Approaches that do not demonstrate improvements in student performance should not be replicated.

The Education Reform Act also directs the Commissioner to take additional steps on behalf students in those schools determined to be “chronically under-performing” including the appointment of a receiver to replace the principal. This receiver will have enhanced authority to reorganize or replace staff and will report directly to the Commissioner. Because it is not possible to determine under-performance without first defining performance, the Commissioner will not exercise this authority until school standards are established.

Ultimately, if schools are to become true service organizations, they must be accountable to the consumers of their services, parents and students. Historically only some parents and students have had the means to choose what school they felt best met their needs. School choice increases the number of parents and students who have access to this choice, but a lack of reliable information has made it impossible to make an informed decision based on the strengths and weaknesses of a particular school.

To fill this need, the Department of Education and Executive Office of Education have been working jointly for over a year to publish informational profiles on each school and district. These profiles will make public the same information that the state uses to evaluate schools. The profiles will enable parents and students to make their own determinations of the quality of a school and will assist each community in evaluating the performance of its schools.

Education Reform has dramatically increased both the quality and quantity of information that schools, districts, and the state need to exchange. During the first year of Reform, much of this effort was ad hoc in response to immediate implementation needs. In addition to the comprehensive bi-annual report that districts have traditionally filed, separate surveys were undertaken in areas such as time and learning, school facilities, student expulsion, use of new funds, English as Second Language (ESL) teachers, technology, and school councils. In future years, every effort will be made to coordinate and simplify these requests for information. Technology will play a major role in increasing the efficiency of this process. Over the next two years, an electronic network will be established in which standardized student and staff records and school budgets can be shared between schools, districts, and the state. These networked databases will significantly increase the efficiency with which data is collected and the timeliness and accessibility with which it can be analyzed and made available.

Accountability to Parents and Students

Collection of School and District Information



Education Reform will enhance the quality and professionalism of teachers.

Analysis of Strategic Goal IV

IV Enhance the quality and accountability of all educational personnel.



Introduction

In the end, each school's ability to educate its students to high standards depends more than anything else on the quality of its professional staff. Just as the standards of the Common Core of Learning articulate common expectations for students, professional standards describe commonly held beliefs about effective teaching and school administration. Like those for students, professional standards will be rooted in national efforts and lead to fair, authentic, and meaningful accountability tools that will drive the type of systemic changes that Education Reform requires. As with the standards of the Common Core of Learning or the Foundation Budget, the new professional standards require a significant departure from past practices.

The development of professional standards was delayed for much of the first year of implementation because the initial changes to the certification statute included in the Education Reform Act required major changes. In January, after months of work, consensus was finally reached with all major stakeholders and corrective legislation was signed into law. Developmental work began on professional standards in the Spring. When completed, these standards will form the base for the two main elements of Strategic Goal IV: professional licensure and employment.

The license to be legally employed is a minimal standard regulated by the state. There are three stages to the new state licensure process: 1) provisional certification, 2) full certification, and 3) recertification.

Professional Licensure

Beginning in October, 1994, all new teachers or administrators must first receive **provisional certification** for an initial "residency" before going on to full certification. The main objective of provisional certification is to screen potential educators to ensure that they have requisite content knowledge necessary to become effective teachers or administrators. Since it is difficult for teachers or administrators to be either trained fully or evaluated authentically prior to entering their profession, the emphasis of this stage will be on knowledge of subject matter and foundations of teaching/school administration. As such, provisional certification will measure each potential

educator's content knowledge, but will include only minimal pedagogical or administrative requirements.

In the five years following the granting of a provisional certificate, teachers/administrators who plan on remaining in the profession will engage in the majority of their formal professional training and obtain **full certification**. Since content knowledge will have been assessed through the provisional certification process, the focus of this training will be on effective pedagogy/administration. Provisionally certified educators will remain under the supervision of a mentor while being trained through a higher education or district-based program. These programs would be evaluated by the state to determine if they fulfill the state's professional standards.

Interim regulations were adopted by the Board of Education in May to establish the first two stages of the license process. Next year, further regulations will be developed to align these two stages more closely to the descriptions of effective teaching / administrating included in the professional standards.

In May, the Board also accepted the basic outline for the third stage of state licensure, **recertification**. Unlike the previous two steps, recertification is an ongoing requirement for all educators, including those currently in the field. The objective of recertification is to increase educators' professional currency by setting a minimal standard for the amount of professional development activities that all educators engage in. Every five years all educators will now be required to show that they have successfully completed an individual development plan. The plan must include at least 120 point/hours of professional development activities for the educator's primary area of certification and at least 30 point/hours for each additional certificate. Educators maintain the option of putting any additional certificates "in storage" to be reactivated within two years of moving into the dormant certificate area. An informational booklet further explaining recertification requirements has been distributed to all educators during the summer and regulations will be completed in the Fall.

Employment of Educational Professionals

The second main area in which professional standards are important relates to the district's authority to make employment decisions with regard to its educational personnel. One of the basic assumptions of the Education Reform Act is that a new system is needed to enhance professional performance. The Act directs the Board of Education to set statewide "guidelines for establishing systems of evaluation, including teacher performance standards." Like the system for student assessments, these guidelines must be fair, authentic, and comprehensive. In addition to direct observation, surveys of parents,

professional development objectives, and other authentic evaluation techniques will be explored. Work has only begun on these guidelines and will take most of next year to complete.

Once completed, the Board's guidelines will form a base for collectively bargained local performance standards. Teachers with professional status may be dismissed for failure to meet these performance standards. Contested dismissals are appealable only to arbitrators who are provided by the American Arbitration Association through the Commissioner. In reviewing contested dismissals, arbitrators are to "consider the best interests of the pupils in the district and the need for elevation of performance standards."


Education Reform presents tremendous new challenges to educators. For many teachers, the curriculum frameworks will describe new ways of teaching. For many administrators, school-based management will be a new way of running schools. Not only does Education Reform create many major changes, it more importantly sets the stage for an education system that will have to continuously change to keep pace with the revolution of the information age. In this system, ongoing development of professional skills is absolutely essential. A substantial commitment to professional development will need to be made at all levels of the education system.

Professional Development

All certified educators must begin to develop ongoing **Individual Professional Development Plans**. The professional development activities included in these plan need not be higher education courses. As much as possible, the IPDP should focus on school-based activities directly connected to improving student learning. In-service workshops, cooperative professional projects, mentoring, and peer coaching are all acceptable professional development activities that count towards an educator's recertification requirements.

The primary responsibility for planning and providing professional development lies at the individual school and district levels. School councils should include a total professional development strategy in their **School Improvement Plan**. Superintendents should work with school committees to develop a **District Professional Development Plan** and budget to support these professional development activities that approximate 3% of the total salary budget for the district. From these District Plans, the Commissioner of Education will formulate a **Statewide Professional Development Plan** to determine how the state can be most supportive. While the state will provide a certain amount of professional development activities, it should be stressed that the major financial responsibility to provide these activities lies at the district level.

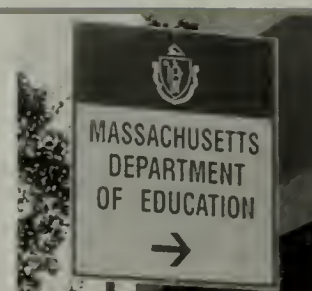



MASSACHUSETTS
DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION
→

*The Department of Education will provide leadership and support
to implement Education Reform.*

Analysis of Strategic Goal V

V Improve the Department of Education's capacity and effectiveness in implementing Education Reform.



The last two years have been a particularly intensive period of change for the Department of Education. In addition to moving from Quincy to Malden and implementing a comprehensive reorganization, the Department redefined its basic mission to align with the Education Reform Act. Under the leadership of the Board of Education, the Department of Education is now responsible for the development and support of statewide standards for students, teachers, administrators, schools, and districts. This change in focus has necessitated several major changes within the Department.

Introduction

During the first few months Department of Education staff had to learn about Education Reform even as others looked to the Department to explain it. As soon as the Education Reform Act passed, Department staff began analyzing it to develop resource materials for school districts and other interested parties. An initial packet including a copy of the Act, index, and calendar of key dates was disseminated to every district and community along with an invitation to send a team to one of four summer conferences. Also during the summer Department staff dissected the Act to develop an implementation plan for all new state responsibilities.

Leadership on Education Reform

The development of the Education Reform Implementation Plan exemplifies the Department's new approach. A bottom-up approach was used to develop the plan in which the lead teams identified for each new activity were given the major responsibility to develop a work plan for implementing the activity. Once approved, the results of these work plans were summarized, formatted, and distributed widely in an effort to broaden the participation of all key stakeholders in implementation and to make public benchmark by which schools, the Legislature, the Governor, and the public could hold the Department accountable.

Development of Statewide Standards

The majority of the work to implement Education Reform must be done at the classroom and building level. The Department's primary role in this effort is to develop and propose to the Board of Education statewide standards. In developing these standards, the Department has made a conscious commitment to maximizing the involvement of all key stakeholders. As has been noted throughout this report, thousands of teachers, parents, community leaders, and students have already been involved in this process. Thousands more will be involved in future years. Broad-based involvement is important both because it will improve the quality of standards which are developed and because the act of participation itself is important to each participants support and appreciation of Education Reform.

Supporting People in Achieving the Standards

In order to better support students, teachers, and administrators in achieving their individual standards, the Department of Education has shifted its focus from that of a regulatory agency to that of a customer-driven service organization. All efforts are made to respond to both the long-term and immediate needs of the Department's "customers." From responding to the exponential increase in phone requests with prompt professionalism, to thoughtful leadership in the development of resources and workshops on key implementation issues, Department staff have begun to model a service orientation.

Partnerships and Outreach

Under the Commissioner's proclamation, "working together for better results," the Department has tried to build cooperative partnerships with other state agencies and stakeholders. The Department has worked particularly closely with higher education. In addition to tapping the considerable expertise that Massachusetts public and private institutions of higher education offer, the Department has begun to develop a new relationship with teacher training institutions to integrate the standards of Education Reform. The newly formed Committee on Education Policy, chaired by the Secretary and consisting of the Executive Boards of the Board of Education and Higher Education Coordinating Council, has met quarterly to look for opportunities where K-12 and higher education can further collaborate.

In July, the Board formalized its advisory structure by appointing fifteen new statewide advisory councils. These councils reflect the Commissioner's commitment to creating a fresh approach. In selecting membership for the councils, extensive outreach was undertaken that resulted in a pool of over 900 applications that reflected the diversity of perspectives and wealth of knowledge available in the Commonwealth.

To meet the objectives of Education Reform information technologies must be integrated into the education system. The Secretary of Education, in cooperation with the Secretary of Economic Affairs, oversaw a year-long study of educational technologies called Mass Ed Online. As a result of this plan, the Department of Education has begun working with the Massachusetts Corporation for Educational Telecommunication (MCET) to establish a state-wide wide-area network (WAN) that will eventually link every school to each other, the state, and, through the Internet, to the world. As a first step, MCET will have in place an initial linkage for each school in the early Fall. The Governor's recently released Information Technology Bond and pending federal grants will allow this network to be "scaled-up" to allow full usage by all students and school personnel.

Technology

Conclusions

This report brings the 1st year's Education Reform Implementation Plan to completion. A tremendous amount has been accomplished. Beginning with the passage of the Education Reform Act in June, the Commonwealth has taken its first major steps down the long road of public education renewal. The success of these efforts can only truly be measured in decades and generations. The foundation budget, for example creates a standard for equity in school finance. However, it won't be until the year 2012 that the Commonwealth can promise that 100% of its students will receive an education that meets the standards of adequate resources. The other standards will take a similar amount of time to be fully implemented.

Nonetheless, interim evaluations must be continuously made to determine if the Commonwealth remains on course. In addition to the ongoing oversight and leadership provided by the Board of Education and its Education Reform Implementation Task Force (MERIT), two other state entities are specifically charged with tracking the progress of Education Reform. As part of her efforts to create a Master Plan for Public Education, the Secretary of Education is responsible for creating an annual Report on the Conditions of Massachusetts Public Schools. The first installment of this report is expected to be completed early next Fall. A second, distinct analysis is underway by the statutorially created Education Reform Review Commission. This Commission, comprised of representatives from the public, the major statewide associations, and the University of Massachusetts has begun to build a framework for tracking the long-term progress of Education Reform.

Finally, although the first Education Reform Implementation Plan is complete, work has already begun on the development of a comprehensive, Five Year Master Plan for public education. This Plan will extend the Implementation Plan into the future, create long-term budget projections for major Reform initiatives, serve as the State Improvement Plan called for by the federal Goals 2000 Act, and provide a unifying structure to link Department of Education work prior to the passage of the Education Reform Act.

Glossary

authentic assessment (for students) Portfolio assessments, performance evaluations, open-ended exams, and other assessment instruments used to evaluate student performance on those work and life skills embodied in the Common Core of Learning

Common Core of Learning What all students should know and be able to do upon graduation from high school

content standards Specific measurable descriptions of what students should know and be able to do at the 4th, 8th, and 10th grade in each curriculum framework area

curriculum frameworks Recommended teaching practices for fulfilling the Common Core of Learning

implementation activities The fifty-four distinct initiatives that the Department of Education and Executive Office of Education undertook to implement the first year of the Education Reform Act of 1993

Individual Professional Development Plan A description of each educator's objectives for professional growth and plan for fulfilling the objectives

interim indicators (school performance standards) The criteria which will be used to evaluate school and district performance over the next few years as the statewide student assessment system is developed

full certification A five year renewable license to teach or administrate

portfolio assessments A technique of evaluating student authentic performance based on the review of a series of distinct activities usually collected over an extended period of time and scored according to established standards

professional performance standards (state) The part of the state guidelines for evaluating educational personnel that describes what specific, professional objectives should be used as a base for locally bargained standards

professional performance standards (local) Collectively bargained standards for the professional performance of educational personnel, based on state standards and used to evaluate and make employment decisions

professional licensure State regulated minimal standards for legal employment as a teacher, guidance counselor, school psychologist, school librarian, school nurse, audio-visual media specialist, unified media specialist, school business administrator, principal, supervisor, director, assistant superintendent of schools, or superintendent of schools consisting of three parts: 1) provisional certification, 2) full certification, and 3) recertification.

professional standards Commonly held beliefs about effective teaching and school administration that provide a base for professional licensure and professional performance standards of employment

professional teacher status The legal status which replaces tenure to protect teachers with three years of seniority from dismissal except for inefficiency, incompetency, incapacity, conduct unbecoming a teacher, insubordination, failure to satisfy performance standards, or other just cause

provisional certification The initial license that an educator receives which focuses on ensuring adequate content knowledge

recertification The process in which educators renew their full certificate(s) at least every five years by demonstrating successful completion of an individual professional development plan

statewide evaluation guidelines Guidelines established by the Board that form a base for a locally bargained process in which professional evaluations will occur

District Professional Development Plan A plan and budget developed by each superintendent and school committee describing how the educators in that district will advance their professional objectives and fulfill their recertification requirements

school performance standards Standards established by the Board of Education which will be used to generate school profiles and evaluate school performance or underperformance

student performance standards The specific level of performance required to receive a certificate of competency, mastery, or occupational proficiency

standards Agreed upon expectations of satisfactory performance (see content standards, professional performance standards, student performance standards, school performance standards)

strategic goals The five goals of the Education Reform Implementation Plan approved by the Board of Education

Acknowledgments

The Massachusetts Board of Education gratefully acknowledges the outstanding work of the staff of both the Department of Education and Executive Office of Education. Throughout the first year of implementation, both agencies demonstrated a high standard of professionalism and a firm commitment to improving student learning.

The quality of this work was evident at all levels of the Department, from the Senior Staff who oversaw the entire implementation effort (Commissioner, **Robert V. Antonucci**, Deputy Commissioner, **David Driscoll**, Associate Commissioners, **Mary Beth Fafard**, **Mildred Allen**, **Nicholas Fischer**, Legal Counsel, **Rhoda Schneider**, to the Department administrators who led individual activities (**Julie Altshuler**, **Pam Barry**, **Lynn Beal**, **Robert Bickerton**, **Robert Blumenthal**, **Thomas Collins**, **Anthony DeLorenzo**, **Susan Freedman**, **Daniel French**, **Carol Gilbert**, **Gilman Hebert**, **Pamela Kaufmann**, **Richard Knox**, **Marie Lindahl**, **Marcia Mittnacht**, **Jeffrey Nellhaus**, **Diane Price**, **Alan Safran**, **Elisabeth Schaefer**, **John Sullivan**, **Carole Thomson**, and **Doreen Wilkinson**); to hundreds of staff members whose time, energy, good spirits, and expertise were indispensable to making the first year of Education Reform successful.

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Particular acknowledgement is due to **Gregory G. Nadeau**, Special Assistant to the Commissioner, who oversaw the creation of the Implementation Plan, Quarterly Reports, and this First Annual Implementation Report.

Finally, the staff of these two agencies did not work alone. In addition to the hundreds of students, parents, community members, and educators who contributed their time to the forty-nine advisory groups and commissions described in Appendix B of Part Two, thousands of others participated actively at the school-based level to assist in implementing the Education Reform Act. The Board acknowledges that without their contributions nothing would be possible.

Credits

This document was formatted and designed by Booth Simpson Designers.

The photograph of the student featured on p.10 was taken by Bob Kramer.

The photographs of books on p.16, a school on p.20, and the Department of Education on p.28 were taken by Terry Blailer.

The picture of the teacher on p.24 was taken by Deneen Silviano of PALMS (Partnerships Advancing Learning of Mathematics and Science).

